CCH14

March 2, 1931.

CIRCULAR LETTER NO. 107

To: Supervisors of Schools
High School Principals
Science Teachers.

Ladies and gentlemen:

The following set of rules will govern the conduct of laboratory work in the science classes in the high schools of Porto Rico.

1. All work in the science laboratories must be done under the immediate guidance and supervision of the teacher. In no case will students be allowed to stay in the laboratories at hours others than the ones indicated in the schedule.

2. Science teachers are hereby instructed to be present in the laboratory room during all the time when experiments are performed and will see that when the laboratory work is completed the doors leading to the laboratory are locked. In case the doors have no lock the Principal will make the necessary arrangements so as to provide for adequately locking all entrances to the laboratories.

3. High school principals will see to it that all such substances as postassium cyanide, carbon disulphide, hydrofluoric acid, yellow phosphorous, sodium, and the like are locked and inaccessible to the students.

4. In case denatured alcohol is used a s a combustible in the laboratories, the supply should be under the custody of the teacher and the practice of <u>filling the lamps, etc.</u> should be done by the <u>teacher himself</u>. The science teachers are hereby specifically instructed not to delegate to students this duty.

5. Such experiments as the preparation of chlorine, bromine, and the experiments requiring the use of yellowphosphorous, sodium, and other poisonous or explosive substances will be performed by <u>the teacher</u> only, as demonstration experiments.

6. In performing such experiments as the preparation of hydrogen, the teachers should see that the instructions in the manual are followed. This applies specially to the practice of covering with a towel the bottle in which hydrogen is exploded.

7. The experiments on bromine and chlorine should be performed under the hood; the other experiments on the halogens are eliminated.

8. Students should be instructed that under no cirumstances should they smell any bottle no matter what the supposed contents are. The rules for laboratory work provide that whenever it is necessary to smell a bottle containing volatile chemicals the correct practice is to hold the bottle open within about a foot from the nose and then slightly blow the volatile substance with the hand. Any deviation from this practice may produce serious injuries to the students, specially in the case of bromine and chlorine, which affect the respiratory organs.

These instructions should be followed without deviation.

Yours truly,

(Signed) José Padín,
Commissioner of Education.

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